Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-06 AID-01 $/032\:\mathrm{W}$

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P 161130Z JAN 79

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7310

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CORRECTEDCOPY (TEXT)

E.O. 12065: GDS 1/16/85 (MAISTO, JOHN F.) OR-P TAGS: OREP (BEDELL, BERKLEY W.), RP

SUBJECT: CODEL BEDELL

1. CONGRESSMAN BEDELL HAS NOT CLEARED.

2. (C) SUMMARY: DURING CONG. BEDELL'S FIVE-DAY VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES, HE SOUGHT TO ASSESS THE MARTIAL LAW GOVERNMENT -- INCLUDING THE MOVEMENT TO NORMALIZATION -- AND HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION, TO LOOK INTO LAND REFORM, AND TO STUDY US STRATEGIC INTERESTS. HE ALSO LOOKED INTO THE AQUINO CASE. HE RECEIVED COUNTRY TEAM, JUSMAG, AID, AND BASES BRIEFINGS. HE ALSO MET WITH PRES. MARCOS, MINDEF ENRILE, BENIGNO AQUINO, OPPOSITION LEADERS, GOVERNMENT TECHNOCRATS, POLITICAL DETAINEES, AND CHURCH PEOPLE. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) CONG. BERKLEY W. BEDELL (D-IOWA) AND MRS. BEDELL VISITED THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY 7-12. HIS PROGRAM INCLUDED MIX OF ACTIVITIES ARRANGED BY EMBASSY AND THOSE HE ARRANGED FOR HIMSELF. EMBASSY-ARRANGED ACTIVITIES INCLUDED A COUNTRY TEAM BRIEFING AND VISITS/BRIEFINGS AT JUSMAG, AID, CLARK AFB AND SUBIC NAVAL BASE. CODEL ALSO MET WITH DEFMIN JUAN PONCE ENRILE, HAD A 75-MINUTE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS AND A SEPARATE 15-MINUTE MEETING CONFIDENTIAL

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WITH MRS. MARCOS. THERE WERE THREE MISSION-SPONSORED SOCIAL OCCASIONS -- A BREAKFAST WITH GOP DEVELOPMENT TECHNOCRATS HOSTED BY AID DIRECTOR, BREAKFAST WITH ENRILE AND A STAG DINNER ATTENDED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, TECHNOCRATS, AND A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, BOTH GIVEN BY THE AMBASSADOR -- PLUS AN EXCURSION TO CORREGIDOR. MRS. BEDELL ACCOMPANIED CONGRESSMAN IN ALL ACTIVITIES EXCEPT

JUSMAG'S CLASSIFIED BRIEFING AND AMBASSADOR'S DINNER.

- 4. (C) IN CONGRESSMAN'S JAN. 8 BREAKFAST MEETING WITH MINDEF ENRILE AT AMOQSSADOR'S RESIDEMBE, MINISTER INFORMED CONGRESSMAN HE COULD VISIT EX-UNNATOR BENIGNO AQUINO IN HIS FT. BONIFACIO DETENTION QUARTERS; VISIT WAS ARRANGED FOR JAN. 9. ENRILE ALSO TOLD CONGRESSMAN THAT HE COULD VISIT ANY OTHER DETENTION CENTER HE CHOSE. CONGRESSMACQ LATER AUTED TO VISIT THE BICUTAN FHTENTION FACILITY IN MANILA AND DID JAN. 9, ACCBCPANIED BY MRS. BEDL AND EMBOFF. ADDITIONALLY, CONGRESSMAN ARRANGED PRIVATELY FOR MEETINGS WITH OPPOSITION FIGURES, INCLUDING EX-SENATORS DIOKNO (NP), TANADA (OWN PARTY), AND SALONGA, AND MRS. CORY AQUINO. HE ALSO MET (SEPARATELY) WITH CHURCH PEOPLE.
- 5. CONGRESSMAN BEDELL ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS DEFINED HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE.
 AS SCHEDULE INDICATES, HE WAS EXPOSED TO A GOOD SAMPLING OF DIVERSE FILIPINO VIEWS, MANY OF THEM, NOT SURPRISINGLY, CONTRADICTORY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE BEDELLS EXPERIENCED AN OPEN ATMOSPHERE WHICH INCLUDED FRANK INTERCHANGE WITH PRES. MARCOS, MINDEF ENRILE, AND OT VR HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND TECHNOCRATS, READYHCCESS TO THE OPPOSITION, INCLUDING THOSE IN JAIL, AND EXPOSURE TO CRITICAL VIEWS FREELY EXPRESSED BY PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT POSITIONS AS WELL AS BY OPPOSITION LUMINARIES. ADDITION-CONFIDENTIAL

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ALLY, MEETINGS WITHIN THE MISSION AND AT THE BASES GAVE GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW US-RP RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE BASES AGREEMENT, AND OVERALL US INTERESTS IN SEA. ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION CONGRESSMAN SAID THAT AFTER HEARING THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND VARYING INTERPRETATIONS, HE FOUND THE PROBLEMS AND THE ISSUES TO BE MORE COMPLEX THAN HE HAD ORIGINALLY THOUGHT. HE INDICATED TO EMBOFFS THAT, AFTER HIS DEPARTURE, HE WOULD HAVE A LOT OF ASSESSING, SORTING OUT, AND HARD THINKING TO DO ABOUT THE SITUATION HERE AND US-PHIL RELATIONS.

- 6. CONGRESSMAN'S MAIN INTERESTS, AS EVIDENCED BY HIS QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND COMPOSITION OF HIS PROGRAM WERE:
- (1) TO ASSESS THE NATURE OF THE MARTIAL LAW GOVERN-MENT, INCLUDING NORMALIZATION;
- (2) TO LOOK INTO THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS;
- (3) TO LOOK INTO THE AQUINO CASE;

- (4) TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE ONGOING LAND REFORM PROGRAM AND ON OTHER PHIL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AFFECTING THE LANDLESS AND THE POOR:
- (5) TO HEAR FROM US OFFICIALS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR US ASSISTANCE, BOTH ECONOMIC AND MILITARY, TO THE MARCOS MARTIAL LAW GOVERNMENT.

FOLLOWING HIS MEETINGS WITH AQUINO, POLITICAL DETAINEES

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AND OPPOSITION POLITICIANS, CONGRESSMAN INDICATED THAT HIS CONCERNS WERE BECOMING LESS CENTERED ON TORTURE AND MORE ON THE POST 1972 "LOSS OF DEMOCRACY" IN THE RP, INCLUDING THE FRAUDULENT APRIL 7, 1978 ELECTION.

7. MEETING WITH ENRILE: CODEL'S FIRST MEETING WITH A GOP OFFICIAL WAS BREAKFAST WITH MINDEF JUAN PONCE ENRILE ON JANUARY 8. AFTER QUICKLY ARRANGING VISIT TO AQUINO, INTERCHANGE COVERED HISTORY OF MARTIAL LAW, POWERS OF EXECUTIVE AND THE COURTS, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PHIL CONSTABULARY AND REST OF MILITARY, STATE OF NORMALIZATION. CHARGES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AND NATURE OF THE COMMUNIST THREAT. ENRILE EMPHASIZED THAT MARTIAL LAW IS TRANSITORY AND THAT ONLY LEGAL ASPECT THAT STILL REMAINS OF MARTIAL LAW IS SUSPENSION OF WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS. HE ALSO SAID THAT LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE COMING. (AT AMBASSADOR'S JAN. 11 DINNER ENRILE TOLD CONGRESSMAN THAT THESE "FREE ELECTIONS" POSSIBLY COMBINING ELECTIONS FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS AND NATIONAL LEGISLATORS WILL TAKE PLACE "WITHIN 2 YEARS, IN 1980 OR EARLY 1981" AND PROMISED TD INVITE CONGRESSMAN TO WITNESS THEM.)

8. (U) EMBASSY, JUSMAG, AID AND BASES BRIEFINGS:

- (A) EMBASSY COUNTRY TEAM BRIEFING FOCUSSED ON CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTIVITIES OF SEPARATE COMPONENTS OF US MISSION. CONGRESSMAN ASKED ABOUT LAND REFORM AND US INVESTMENT IN RP; IN LATER CONTACT WITH EMBOFFS HE RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT TORTURE CHARGES, VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION, AND THE NEW LEGISLATURE (IBP).

- (B) AT JUSMAG CONGRESSMAN CONCENTRATED ON DIFFERENCES
 BETWEEN PHIL CONSTABULARY COMBAT BATALLIONS, WHICH RECEIVE
 MAP ASSISTANCE, AND 147 PC PROVINCIAL COMPANIES ASSIGNED
 TO POLICE WORK, WHICH DO NOT. JUSMAG EMPHASIZED THAT MAP
 SUPPORT IS PROVIDED ONLY TO PC COMBAT BATALLIONS AND NOT
 TO ANY NON-COMBAT PC OR INP UNITS OR ACTIVITIES. HAVING
 EARLIER PROVIDED A LIST OF MAJOR END ITEMS OF MILITARY
 EQUIPMENT SINCE 1976, JUSMAG EXPLAINED HOW IT MONITORS
 DELIVERY AND USE OF EQUIPMENT AND HOW IMET TRAINING IS
 HANDLED, INCLUDING SCREENING OF NOMINEES AND MONITORING
 UTILIZATION OF THE TRAINING AFTER RETURN.
- (C) AID DIRECTOR HOSTED A BREAKFAST MEETING FOR BEDELLS WITH MIN OF DEVELOPMENT SICAT, AG VICE MIN ZOSA, AND HEAD OF RURAL ELECTRIFICATION DUMOL. REST OF MORNING WAS SPENT AT AID MISSION BRIEFING. CONGRESSMAN HAD QUESTIONS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POPULATION PROGRAM, HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, FOOD PRODUCTION, AND NUTRITION, BUT EMPHASES OF BRIEFING AND CONGRESSMAN'S QUESTIONS WERE ON LAND REFORM. (CONGRESSMAN'S POINT OF REFERENCE WAS A YEAR-OLD-PLUS STUDY BY A CANADIAN UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR (DAVID WURFEL) WHICH CLAIMED THAT ONLY 50,000 FARMERS HAVE RECEIVED LAND AND THAT PROGRAM WAS A FRAUD.) AID PROVIDED FIGURES AND MONITORING RESULTS TO SHOW THAT TO DATE 290,000 OF 400,000 ELIGIBLE TENANTS HAVE RECEIVED TITLES TO LAND IN RICE AND CORN AREAS. (2 AID-A-08, JAN. 12, CONFIDENTIAL

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1978)

- (D) VISIT TO CLARK AND SUBIC: CONGRESSMAN'S CONCERNS AT CLARK AND SUBIC CENTERED ON HOW US FACILITIES WILL FUNCTION UNDER PHIL-COMMANDED BASES.

CONGRESSMAN ALSO QUERIED MILITARY MEMBERS OF US NEGOTIATING PANEL PARTICIPATING IN BRIEFINGS ABOUT US MILITARY (VS POLITICAL) MOTIVATIONS FOR AN AMENDED AGREEMENT, MEANING OF FIVE YEAR REVIEW PROVISION, IF THE 1991 TREATY TERMINATION DATE IS STILL VALID, BASE SECURITY, AND HOW PHILS LIKELY TO REACT IF THE \$200 MILLION SSA COMPONENT OF COMPENSATION PACKAGE IS NOT APPROVED BY CONGRESS. AT SUBIC, CONGRESSMAN TOOK NOTE OF COST COMPARISONS OF SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES.

9. VISIT TO BICUTAN REHABILITATION CENTER: BEDELLS AND POLOFF VISITED PC DETENTION CENTER IN MANILA SUBURB FOR 90 MINUTES JAN. 9 FOLLOWING CONGRESSMAN'S SOLO MEETING WITH AQUINO (REPORTED SEPTEL). IN HIS BRIEFING, CENTER COMMANDER REPORTED THERE WERE 39 PUBLIC ORDER VIOLATORS (POV'S) AND 428 COMMON CRIMINALS AT BICUTAN. CONGRESSMAN TOURED FACILITY AND INTERVIEWED MANY OF THE POV'S, SOME OF WHOM SMILINGLY REFERRED TO THEMSELVES AS THE "HARD-CORE" OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS. CONG. BEDELL TOOK NOTES AND TAPE-RECORDED HIS INTERVIEWS. HE ASKED OUESTIONS ABOUT AND WAS TOLD OF PAST TORTURE IN SAFEHOUSES AT THE TIME OF ARREST AND INTERROGATION AT THE HANDS OF PC PERSONNEL (SOME OF THEM WERE NAMED); THE STATUS OF INDIVIDUAL CASES (ALL HAD LAWYERS); AND JAIL CONDITIONS. MOST PRISONERS SAID THEY WERE OF UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND, APPEARED TO BE IN THEIR TWENTIES AND EARLY THIRTIES, AND LOOKED FIT; THEY SAID THEY WERE FREE TO MOVE ABOUT THE CENTER AND HAD ACCESS TO TV, RADIO, AND BOOKS AND PERIODICALS. TWO GAVE CONGRESSMAN

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TYPED RESUMES OF THEIR CASES. MOST COMPLAINED OF NOT KNOW-ING SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST THEM, SOME FOR THREE, FOUR, FIVE OR IN ONE CASE NINE YEARS AFTER ARREST. (ENRILE LATER TOLD CONGRESSMAN THIS WAS NOT TRUE AND SPELLED OUT REQUIREMENT OF GOP LAW RE INFORMING DETAINEE OF CHARGES. HE NOTED

THAT GROUP CONGRESSMAN VISITED WERE KEY COMMUNIST LEADERS WHOSE CASES ARE UNDER APPEAL. MINISTER ADDED THAT SEVERAL OF DETAINEES CONGRESSMAN SAW WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEATHS OF PHILIPPINE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND NOT JUST, AS THEY MIGHT APPEAR, HARMLESS INTELLECTUALS ATTACHED TO MARXIST DOCTRINES. ENRILE ALSO OBSERVED THAT MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY CONTINUES TO BE A VIOLATION OF PHILIPPINE LAW.)

10. (C) MEETING WITH PRES. MARCOS: BEDELLS, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR AND POLOFF, MET FOR AN HOUR WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS AT MALACANANG JAN. 10. AT OUTSET MARCOS REFERRED TO CONGRESSMAN'S REQUEST TO VISIT AQUINO (CONGRESSMAN EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION TO MARCOS FOR HAVING AUTHORIZED THE VISIT), AND TO CONGRESSMAN'S CONVERSATION WITH ENRILE RE JUSTIFICATION OF MARTIAL LAW. MARCOS THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LONG EXPLANATION OF THE MUSLIM SITUATION, NOTING THAT GOP IS NOW "NEGOTIATING" WITH QADHAFI (MARCOS SAID QADHAFI SENT WORD IN NOVEMBER THAT HE WANTED TO REOPEN TALKS) OVER THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. IN THIS REGARD, MARCOS CONFIDED THAT HE WANTS TO PRESENT QADHAFI WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI -- AGREEMENT WITH MISUARI AND ELECTIONS CONFIDENTIAL.

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SCHEDULED IN TWO REGIONS IN THE SOUTH FOR LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS. MARCOS SAID THAT QADHAFI IS "CUNNING" AND THAT IN THIS SITUATION "WE CANNOT LET OUR DEFENSES DOWN."

- 11. CONGRESSMAN BEDELL THEN EXPLAINED HIS CONCERNS ABOUT THE PHILIPPINES. HE INDICATED THAT HE WASN'T TELLING THE PRESIDENT HOW TO RUN HIS GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT AT SAME TIME HE WAS CONCERNED, AS A CONGRESSMAN, OVER HOW THE US SPENDS ITS MONEY. CONGRESSMAN SAID THAT HIS PROBLEM BOILS DOWN TO FACT THAT IN PRE-MARTIAL LAW PHILIPPINES, THERE WAS A SYSTEM TO BRING ABOUT PEACEFUL CHANGE, AND NOW THIS DOES NOT SEEM TO BE THE CASE. CONGRESSMAN INDICATED THAT MARCOS GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE ISSUE, PEACEFUL CHANGE AFTER MARCOS IS
- 12. MARCOS SAID HE WELCOMED BEDELL'S CANDIDNESSEAIR#3,953\$ THAT ALTHOUGH PHILIPPINES NO LONGER HAS A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM, IT HAS ELECTIONS, AND HE HAS REPEATEDLY USED PLEBESCITES TO CHECK ON POPULAR WILL. HE SAID VOTE IN MANILA WAS SPLIT IN 1978 ELECTION, DISSENT WAS FREELY EXPRESSED, AND SUPREME COURT AT ANY TIME IN PAST SIX YEARS COULD HAVE STRUCK DOWN (BUT DID NOT) HIS MARTIAL LAW ACTIONS AS ILLEGAL OR ARBITRARY. PRESIDENT STATED IT IS NOT FAIR OR ACCURATE TO SAY THERE IS NO MECHANISM IN THE PHILIPPINES TO CHANGE LEADERSHIP PEACEFULLY.

13. TO CONGRESSMAN'S RESPONSE THAT MANY PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE APRIL 1978 ELECTIONS WERE FREE, MARCOS REPLIED: "SOUR GRAPES." MARCOS SAID THAT LABAN HAS NEVER FILED A PROTEST (ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUALS HAVE). ASKED WHY PEOPLE WERE JAILED AT THE TIME OF THE ELECTION, MARCOS SAID IT WAS NOT FOR POLITICKING, IT WAS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE CONFIDENTIAL

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IN WHICH COMMUNISTS WERE KNOWN TO BE READY TO PARTICIPATE. MARCOS SAID THAT HIS PARTY HAD INFILTRATED LABAN (AND THE LABAN HAD INFILTRATED KBL) AND THEY KNEW OF THE COMMUNIST MANIPULATION OF SOME OPPOSITION CANDIDATES. MARCOS SAID THAT LABAN POLITICIANS (TANADA, AQUINO) HAVE TOLD HIM PERSONALLY THAT THEY ERRED IN TACTICS. MARCOS' VOICE ROSE WHEN HE ALSO NOTED THAT "THESE PEOPLE ARE MY ENEMIES." HE EMPHASIZED THAT SERIOUS VIOLENCE WAS A POSSIBILITY AT THAT TIME, THAT THE ARRESTS WERE TO FORESTALL VIOLENCE, AND THAT ALL THOSE ARRESTED AT THAT TIME HAVE BEEN FREED. THE REST OF THE MEETING CONCERNED AQUINO (SEPTEL).

- 14. BEDELLS MET MRS. MARCOS AS THEY DEPARTED PRESIDENT'S OFFICE. THE MEETING WAS CORDIAL. CONVERSATION CENTERED ON INDOCHINA SITUATION (MANILA 682).
- 15. WITH ONE NOTABLE EXCEPTION, BEDELL VISIT RECEIVED NO MEDIA PLAY EITHER DURING OR AFTER VISIT. ON JAN. 14 THE ACERBIC TEODORO VALENCIA DEDICATED ONE PARAGRAPH OF HIS COLUMN TO THE BEDELL VISIT: "THE AMERICAN CONGRESSMAN WHO LED 114 OTHERS IN SIGNING A LETTER DENOUNCING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES IS IN TOWN. HE HAS BEEN HERE SINCE LAST WEEK. WHEN HE VISITED EX-SENATOR NINOY AQUINO IN HIS DETENTION ROOM, HE REMOVED HIS WATCH, HIS CASH AND ALL HIS VALUABLES AND LEFT THEM IN HIS CAR. HE SAID HE WAS AFRAID THEY WOULD PLANT SOMETHING ON HIM ON HIS WAY OUT. SUCH CLOAK-AND-DAGGER MENTALITY IS TYPICAL OF YOUTHS WHO SEE TOO MANY HOLLYWOOD MOVIES. THAT IS A CLUE TO THE KIND OF MENTALITY SOME OF THE AMERICAN LEGISLATORS HAVE. NO WONDER, AMERICA IS LOSING THE BATTLE FOR

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THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF ASIA. THEY DON'T KNOW ASIANS. THEY HAVE NEVER BOTHERED TO KNOW US."

16. COMMENT: AS THE CONGRESSMAN SAID REPEATEDLY, HE CAME TO THE PHILIPPINES TO LEARN. AT THE END OF THIS VISIT CONG. BEDELL APPEARED TO FEEL THAT THINGS ARE NEITHER AS BAD AS THE OPPOSITION SAYS NOR AS GOOD AS THE MARCOS GOVERNMENT ADVERTISES. HE EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE PROGRAM THE EMBASSY ARRANGED AND IN PARTICULAR FOR OUR REVIEW OF US STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND IN THE REGION. IN THIS REGARD, THE BASES VISIT WAS ESPECPLLLY HELPFUL. MURPHY

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